

Sunflowers



If you have ever driven past a field of sunflowers on a summers day, you will know that it is a really spectacular sight.

For many people, sunflowers are a sign of hope, particularly if they are separated from someone they love.



Do you recognise this famous painting of sunflowers?

It's by an artist called Vincent Van Gogh. You can go and look at it in the National Gallery in London.

Although Vincent was very poor in his lifetime, the painting is now worth over £40 Million.



Vincent Van Gogh had a sad life in some ways because he wasn't very good at making friends with people. Also, nobody thought his paintings were very good in his lifetime. If you would like to find out about his life, there is a very good short film here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GzMkLvPOTrc>



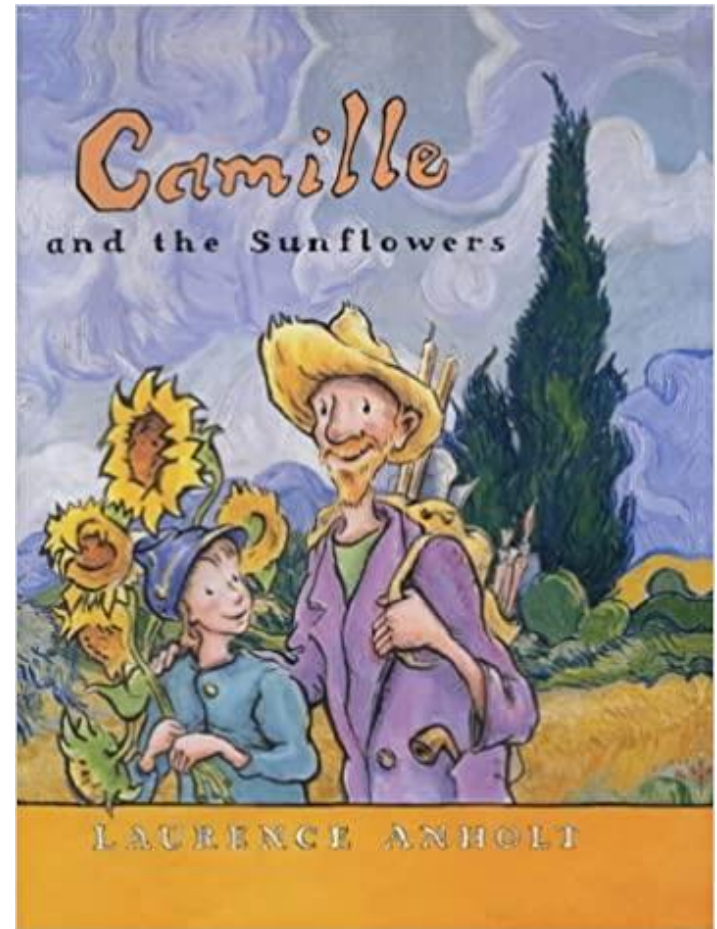


Vincent actually painted the sunflowers 12 times, perhaps because they made him feel hopeful when he was sad.

Camille and the Sunflowers

‘Camille and the Sunflowers’ is a fantastic picture book about Vincent’s life (you will like it however old you are). You can try to get a copy to read for yourself or you can have it read to you here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J0nBIRFLzJw>



Thinking about the story

In the story, Camille's father tells him that the boys threw rocks at Vincent because he was 'different'. Why do you think people do unkind things to people who are 'different'? Why did this make Camille so sad?



Why did Camille feel sadder than ever when he saw the dead sunflowers and realised that Vincent was packing up to leave?

At the end of the story, Vincent shows Camille the painting of the sunflowers and this seems to make him happier to say goodbye. Why do you think this is? This is a difficult question and you might want to discuss it with your family.

For older children

There have been lots of films made about Vincent's life. He even appeared in an episode of Dr Who! The Doctor brought him forward in time so that he could see how one day he would be a very famous artist. You can watch that part of the episode here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ubTJI_UphPk

You can watch the whole episode on the BBC iPlayer here if your parents say you are allowed:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00spgsf>



Thinking about the episode

The scene where Dr Who takes Vincent to the art gallery in the future is happy and sad at the same time – sad because Vincent wasn't appreciated when he was alive but happy because his paintings would be loved in the future.

Have you ever felt sad and happy at the same time?

If you are feeling sad, you can't just 'cheer up' but you can think of things that make you more hopeful. What makes you feel hopeful?

